

Local Workforce Action Boards

Case studies: Lincolnshire



Health Education England supporting the Five Year Forward View

Lincolnshire Talent Academy highlights benefits of Collaboration

In January 2016, the Lincolnshire Local Workforce Action Board (LWAB) approved the funding for a Lincolnshire Talent Academy – an adaptation of the previously run United Lincolnshire Hospitals Talent Academy which had run successfully since April 2015.

The original proposal and blueprint for the Lincolnshire Talent Academy was developed pre-STP and focussed specifically upon the development of local skills and talent in line with organisational demand, supporting staff retention within the county, and to develop a programme that would identify, manage and deliver the evolving skills required from the County's future workforce.

Due to the impact of the apprenticeship reform on the NHS, the apprenticeship programme was to be used in the first instance as the main conduit for skills development across the system.

The Academy sought to increase the engagement of both internal staff and external prospective candidates by removing the barriers created through systematic organisational fragmentation. This was to be achieved through the implementation of a central conduit for ongoing delivery of services.

A framework of delivery was agreed, outlining a programme of activity to be delivered on behalf of the health and care system. Elements were aligned to the Talent for Care Strategy and Widening Participation agenda, focussing on the "Get In, Get On and Go Further" elements.

During the course of the year, the strength of the collaborative partnership approach far exceeded initial expectations, resulting in additional opportunities for further centralised and coordinated delivery presenting themselves, all of which aligned with the direction for future integration.

As a result the Lincolnshire Talent Academy has become the nucleus for shared delivery around the areas of talent pathway development, school and education engagement, and apprenticeship programme management. During 2016/17, the Academy has supported in excess of 4000 individuals through its services, all of whom has been made possible by the creation of the central conduit for engagement.

Key successes have included the design, development and implementation of the Lincolnshire Integrated Health and Care Apprentice role working across acute, community, mental health and social care stakeholders, the significant increase in engagement from schools, colleges and students, with over 450 students being placed within work experience placements within the Academy's stakeholder organisations within the year – an increase of more than nine times against previous year, and also the design and development of clinical and non-clinical career pathways fully utilising the apprenticeship programme.

As a result, the Academy has seen an increase in the number of enquiries from mature individuals from diverse backgrounds and has developed partnerships that allow it to engage with a wide audience, more reflective of the general population.

The STP has become the catalyst for a number of new developments driven by the Talent Academy. Its positioning, as a collective operating outside of organisational day to day pressures, has allowed the Academy the freedom to innovate and to drive development at pace across all stakeholders.

Having been a member of the STP planning workshops over the course of the year, the Talent Academy has been able to support the development and direction of specific pieces of work around talent development and skills gaps. These have included innovative developments such as the creation of the Integrated Health and Care Apprentice role and its implementation in January 2017, the creation of the Youth Engagement Focus Group and a Department of Work and Pensions/Job Centre Plus partnership formed as a result of the Boston Workforce Day. Ministerial approval has also led to the national Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist degree apprenticeship trailblazer, following initial identification of future HEE funding gaps and its immediate impact on the development of the future Lincolnshire workforce.

Moving forwards, it is very much accepted that the implementation of the apprenticeship levy and public sector targets presents a challenge, but also an opportunity for levy paying stakeholders and the wider healthcare system across Lincolnshire. There is the risk that the organisational structure of levy will drive a return to fragmented silo delivery – something the Lincolnshire Talent Academy and its Programme Board members are keen to avoid.

As a result, key stakeholders have given their agreement to fund and further develop the Lincolnshire Talent Academy, moving from a Programme Board to “Business as Usual” service embedded within the County. Future plans include the expansion of shared services supporting the increased administrative functions required to manage the apprenticeship levy at organisational level whilst also contributing to the development of training and education to support the design and implementation of new roles identified by the STP.